

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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INFO CINCPAC

DOD

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0334

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, SN

SUBJECT: USN INTEREST IN OIL STORAGE AND BERTHING
FACILITIES IN SINGAPORE

REFS: (A) USDAO SINGAPORE 220914Z JAN 75

(B) USDAO SINGAPORE 090632Z JAN 75 (NOTAL)

(C) USNAVOFF SINGAPORE 140430Z JAN 75 (NOTAL)

(D) CINCPACFLT 310420Z DEC 74 (NOTAL)

(E) AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 4802 (NOTAL)

(F) CINCPACFLT 21;532Z JAN 75 (NOTAL)

1. AS INDICATED REF A AND OTHER MESSAGES ON THIS SUBJECT, CINCPACFLT IS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING AND EXPANDING USE OF SENOKO OIL DEPOT AND RELATED BERTHING FACILITIES AT THE NEARBY UK NAVAL STORES BASIN (FORMERLY UNDER ANZUK). THESE FACILITIES ARE RELATED IN THAT THE BERTHS ARE AT THE TERMINAL OF A PIPELINE CONNECTING THE STORES BASIN AND THE OIL STORAGE DEPOT.

2. THIS HAS BECOME A MATTER OF URGENCY SINCE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS IN THE FINAL STAGES OF DECIDING ON ITS SCHEDULE OF FORCE WITHDRAWALS FROM SINGAPORE. ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION, THESE DECISIONS ARE TO BE MADE IN FEBRUARY.

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3. OUR BEST OPTION IS TO WORK OUT AN ARRANGEMENT WITH THE BRITISH WHEREBY WE WOULD SHARE IN THE USE AND COST OF MAINTAINING THE FUEL DEPOT AND TO OBTAIN ASSURED ACCESS TO RELATED BERTHS THROUGH NEW ZEALAND OR OTHERWISE. THE ROYAL NAVY IS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING CONTROL OF PART OF THE SENOKO DEPOT AND WOULD PROVIDE AN IDEAL COVER FOR US IF WE ENTERED INTO A COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENT WITH THEM. THE SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT, WE BELIEVE, WOULD WELCOME THIS. A COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENT UNDER A BRITISH UMBRELLA WOULD NOT ONLY BE AN ECONOMICAL WAY FOR THE USN AND ROYAL NAVY TO SERVICE THEIR POL NEEDS, BUT IT WOULD ALSO AVOID ANY POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE GOS WHICH WOULD PROBABLY ARISE IF THE USN SOUGHT TO MAKE THEIR OWN ARRANGEMENTS. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD NOT REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF BRITISH PERSONNEL AND HENCE WOULD NOT RUN COUNTER, TO ANY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE, TO THEIR ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO WITHDRAW FROM SINGAPORE.

4. IF THE BRITISH ARE NOT INTERESTED IN SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, IT APPEARS THAT THE NEW ZEALANDERS MIGHT BE WILLING TO JOIN US IN SUCH AN ENTERPRISE. ACCORDING TO DAO SOURCES, NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSION HAS ALREADY OBTAINED WELLINGTON CONSENT TO SEEK GOS APPROVAL FOR GNZ ASSUMPTION OF CONTROL OVER NECESSARY BERTHS IN NAVAL BASIN FOLLOWING BRITISH DEPARTURE. HOWEVER, SINCE THE BRITISH STILL CONTROL BOTH THE FORMER ANZUK STORES BASIN AND A PORTION OF THE SENOKO DEPOT, OUR APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE FIRST TO THEM. IN EITHER CASE, WE MUST ACT QUICKLY SINCE THE SEMBAWANG SHIPYARD, ADJACENT TO THE STORES BASIN, IS ANXIOUS TO ACQUIRE THESE ADDITIONAL BERTHING FACILITIES AND WE MUST IN EFFECT BEAT THEM TO IT. THE FUEL DEPOT WOULD NOT BE USEFUL TO US WITHOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF A SEGMENT OF THE STORES BASIN, IDEALLY BZRTS 6 AND 7.

5. THIS MESSAGE IS SIMPLY TO ALERT THE DEPARTMENT AND TO REFERENCE THE PERTINENT MESSAGES ON THE SUBJECT WHICH GIVE NECESSARY DETAILS AND BACKGROUND.
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